

Landscaping, Fencing, Walls, Screens and Lighting

SECTION 2331: LANDSCAPING, FENCING, WALLS, SCREENS AND LIGHTING [amended 4/00]

The intent of this section is to promote the public's health, safety, and general welfare by: minimizing noise, air, and visual pollution; improving the appearance of off-street parking and parking lots reducing heat, noise, and the glare of automobile and site lights; requiring buffering between incompatible land uses; regulating the screening of property abutting public rights-of-way; providing wind breaks, protecting and preserving the appearance, character, and value of the business community and residential neighborhood areas; preventing soil erosion and soil depletion; and promoting soil and water retention.

1. **Scope:** These requirements shall apply to all uses for which site plan review is required and any other use so specified in this Ordinance. No site plan shall be approved unless said site plan shows landscaping, berms, greenbelts, buffer zones, and screening consistent with the requirements set forth herein.

2. **Landscape Plan Required:** A landscape plan shall be submitted as part of a site plan review application. The landscape plan shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, the following items:
 - a. Location, spacing, size and descriptions for each plant type proposed for use within the required landscape area.
 - b. Typical straight cross-section including slope, height, and width of berms and swales, type of ground cover, or height and type of construction of wall or fence, including footings.
 - c. Significant construction details to resolve specific site conditions, such as tree wells to preserve existing trees or culverts to maintain natural drainage patterns.
 - d. Identification of natural features, natural drainage areas, existing trees and vegetative cover to be preserved.
 - e. Identification of areas to be grass or other ground cover and method of planting.

3. **General Requirements:**
 - a. A mixture of plant material, such as evergreen, deciduous trees and shrubs, is required as a protective measure against insect and disease infestation. Landscaping shall be multi-tiered with the use of canopy and understory species. Use of native wildflowers and groundcovers other than traditional horticultural grasses is encouraged.

- b. Areas used for storm drainage purposes, such as unfenced drainage courses or retention areas in front or side yards, may be included as a portion of the required landscaped area.
 - c. A means of protecting site trees against injury from mowing equipment and vehicles shall be provided.
 - d. Plantings shall be used to screen service and storage areas and freestanding sign poles.
 - e. Additional landscaping may be required adjacent to buildings to break up long building expanses and walls void of windows.
 - f. Landscaping may be required to serve as windbreaks.
 - g. Landscaping shall be designed to blend with that on adjacent parcels where a road, walkway or other pathway flows between parcels.
4. Landscape Elements: The following minimum standards shall apply:
- a. Quality: Plant material and grasses shall be of generally acceptable varieties and species for the area, free of insects and diseases and hardy to the climate. The Zoning Administrator shall provide a suggested list of acceptable plant materials.
 - b. Waterfront Properties: Landscaping provided within a waterfront setback shall be comprised of native species. A ribbon of at least 30-foot of buffer zone shall be provided immediately adjacent to the waterfront to serve as a buffer for stormwater runoff.
 - c. Placement: Landscaping shall be clustered and staggered rather than situated in straight rows for interest and variety unless such placement is an integral part of a design element, such as an alley of trees.
 - d. Berms and Swales: Berms and swales shall be constructed with slopes not to exceed a 1:3 gradient with side slopes designed and planted to prevent erosion. Slopes shall be protected with sod, seed, shrubs or other form of natural groundcover. Berms shall have a rounded surface, which is a minimum of two (2) feet in width at the highest point of the berm, extending the length of the berm. Berms are not permitted adjacent to the waterfront.
 - e. Existing Trees: If existing plant material is labeled "To Remain" on site plans by the applicant or required by the City, protective techniques, such as, but not limited to, fencing or barriers placed at the dripline around the perimeter of the plant material shall be installed during construction. No vehicle or other construction equipment shall be parked or stored within the dripline of any plant material

intended to be saved. Other protective techniques may be used provided such techniques are approved by the City.

- f. Preservation Required: All existing live trees in excess of twelve (12) inches in diameter and at four and one half (4 ½) feet above the ground shall be preserved as much as practical.
- g. Replacement Required: Should any tree required by this ordinance to be preserved or planted die, it shall be the responsibility of the owner/developer to replace the dead tree with two (2) trees for every one tree lost with trees of a minimum of three (3) inches in diameter four and one-half (4 ½) feet above the ground.
- h. Retained Landscaping In Lieu of New Landscaping: Landscaping requirements may be waived if the existing vegetation to be retained on site meets or exceeds ordinance requirements for landscaping and screening.

5. Greenbelt Buffers:

- a. All required side and rear setbacks shall be landscaped, greenbelt buffers, unless zero-lot-line is employed for a structure or fire access. At least fifty percent of all required front setbacks shall be landscaped and adjacent to the road right-of-way. An average minimum greenbelt of 10 feet shall be maintained along all street frontages. Greenbelt buffers shall be landscaped in grass, ground cover, perennials, and/or other natural, living, landscape material. [amended 12/01, amended 10/02]
- b. All required front setbacks shall be landscaped with a minimum of one (1) canopy or shade tree, two (2) understory or evergreen trees and (2) shrubs, for each thirty (30) lineal feet (or major portion thereof) of frontage abutting the right-of-way. Access ways from public rights-of-way through required landscape strips shall be permitted, but such access ways shall not be subtracted from the lineal dimension used to determine the minimum number of trees and shrubs required.
- c. Deciduous canopy trees shall be a minimum of twelve (12) feet in height and a minimum caliper of 2 inches at four and one-half (4 ½) feet above the ground. Evergreen and understory trees shall be a minimum of six (6) feet high at planting.

6. Installation and Maintenance:

- a. All landscaping and landscape elements shall be planted, and earth moving or grading performed, according to accepted good planting and grading procedures.
- b. Landscaped areas outside of stormwater management areas, native natural areas, beaches, and dune areas may be required to be irrigated.

- c. The owner of property that is required to be landscaped by this Ordinance shall maintain such landscaping in a reasonably healthy condition, free from refuse and debris. All unhealthy and dead material shall be replaced.

7. Screening Between Land Uses:

- a. Upon any improvement for which a site plan is required, screening shall be constructed at least four (4) feet and up to six (6) feet in height may be required along all adjoining boundaries with residentially zoned or used property. A landscape buffer with berming, or landscaping with a fence or a solid wall may be used to meet screening requirements.
- b. Where there is a need to provide a greater noise or dust barrier or to screen more intense development, a solid wall may be required. Such wall shall be constructed on both sides with stone, face brick, poured-in-place simulated face brick, or precast brick panels having simulated face brick.

8. Parking Lot Landscaping: Parking lots exceeding 5,000 square feet (including all parking spaces, lanes, drives and other areas devoted to vehicular use) shall be landscaped with at least one (1) landscape island. For each additional 5,000 square feet (or each additional 20 spaces, whichever is greater) an additional landscape island shall be required. Landscape islands shall be at least 180 square feet in size, with a minimum width of three (3) feet. Landscape islands shall be landscaped with one (1) shade canopy tree and three (3) shrubs for every eight (8) parking spaces. Canopy trees shall be a minimum of twelve (12) feet in height with a minimum caliper of 2 inches at four and one-half (4 ½) feet above the ground. [amended 10/00]

The Zoning Administrator may allow the substitution of bump-outs or other landscaping elements in lieu of landscape islands, as long as the square footage, width, and landscaping requirements are still met. [amended 10/00]

- 9. Loading Area Screening: All loading areas shall be fenced and screened whenever abutting a residential use or district.
- 10. Mechanical Equipment Screening: (this subsection does not apply to single-family residential uses, or to any use in an industrial land use category unless it abuts a residential area.) When located outside of a building, support equipment including air conditioning and heating devices, and water and gas meters, but not including plumbing or exhaust vents or chimneys, are to be screened to the height of the particular piece of equipment, as follows:
 - a. Roof-Mounted Equipment: To be screened by architectural features from the view of abutting streets and parcels.
 - b. Equipment at Grade: When located on the ground adjacent to a building, mechanical equipment is to be screened by landscaping, a solid wall or fencing from the view of the street or surrounding properties.

11. Outdoor Storage Screening: Outdoor open storage of any equipment, vehicles and materials, including waste and waste receptacles, shall be screened from public right-of-way and residential uses or districts. Such storage shall not be located in the required front setback. Commercial and industrial uses do not have to screen from one another. Front yard fencing over 4 feet in height in commercial and industrial zones shall adhere to the required front setback. A screen of up to six (6) feet but not less than four feet may be required as part of a site plan review approval. [amended 10/02]
12. Fencing, all Districts: The placement of a fence requires a development permit or site plan approval. Fencing shall be properly maintained. Fencing materials used as screening shall consist of the following:
 - a. Solid board fences of standard commercial construction. The finished side of the wood shall face abutting properties.
 - b. Open mesh fencing with woven slats, provided that is of standard commercial construction.
 - c. Masonry walls designed and constructed to facilitate maintenance and not modifying natural drainage in such a way as to endanger adjacent property that is of standard commercial construction.
13. Placement: A wall, fence or yard enclosure may be erected on the lot line.
14. Height limitations: [amended 10/02]
 - a. Side and rear yards: In residential districts a wall, fence or yard enclosure may be up to six (6) feet in height behind any building line of a structure which abuts a street (see Figure 2.9).
 - b. Front yards: In any residential front yard (in front of any building line of a structure which abuts a street), the height of a fence shall not exceed three (3) feet, unless an open fence is provided (e.g., chain link, picket) in which case it may be a maximum height of four (4) feet when such fence does not reduce visibility or interfere with clear vision at intersections, alleys and drives.
 - c. Commercial and industrial districts: A wall, fence or yard enclosure may be up to eight (8) feet in height behind the front building line of a structure. In a front yard (in front of any building line of a structure which abuts a street), the height shall not exceed six (6) feet and shall not reduce visibility or interfere with clear vision at intersections, alleys and drives.
15. Barbed wire: No person shall place, string or maintain barbed wire as part of any fence, other work or structure in any zoning district unless approved by the Planning Commission as part of an authorized special use. No barbed wire shall be permitted in any historic district.

16. Corner Clearance: [amended 8/05] The following regulations shall apply to all landscaping, fences, walls, screens, or similar devices at street intersections or driveways:
 - a. No fence, wall, sign, or screen or any planting shall be erected or maintained in such a way as to obstruct vision or interfere with traffic visibility on a curve, or within twenty-five (25) feet of the right-of-way of a street.
 - b. No fence, wall, sign, screen or planting shall be erected or maintained in such a way as to obstruct vision, between a height of three (3) and ten (10) feet, within twenty-five (25) feet of the right-of-way of a street.
 - c. No structure, hazard or obstruction shall be placed or maintained in the right-of-way, except as may be approved by the city.
17. Fire Hazard: No fence or wall shall be approved which constitutes a fire hazard either of itself or in connection with the existing structures in the vicinity, nor which will interfere with access by the Fire Department in case of fire to buildings in the vicinity or which will constitute a hazard to street traffic or to pedestrians.
18. Waterfront Walls and Fences: No fences or walls shall be erected in the waterfront setback. Obscuring walls and fences shall not be placed parallel to the waterfront. Approved fences and walls shall be limited to three (3) feet in height in waterfront yards.
19. Exceptions to Fencing and Screening Requirements:
 - a. Buildings Abutting Lot Lines: Required screening or fencing may be omitted along any lot line where a building wall exists immediately abutting the lot line.
 - b. Existing Screening: Any fence, screen, wall or hedge which does not conform to the provisions of this Section and which is legally existing at the effective date of this Ordinance may be continued and maintained, provided there is no physical change other than necessary maintenance and repair in such fence, screen, wall, or hedge except as permitted in other sections of this Ordinance.
 - c. Planning Commission Modification: Landscaping may be waived or modified provided the Planning Commission first makes a finding that specifically identified characteristics of the site or site vicinity would make required landscaping, fencing or screening unnecessary or ineffective, or where it would impair vision of natural amenities.
20. Outdoor lighting in all districts: [amended 1/05] Outdoor lighting in newly developed commercial and industrial uses, subdivisions, condominium projects and planned unit developments, or replacement lighting for such developments and institutional uses, shall be designed and constructed in such a manner to insure that:
 - a. Direct or directly reflected light is confined to the development site.

- b. All light sources and light lenses are shielded.
- c. No light sources or light lenses are directly visible from beyond the boundary of the site.
- d. Lighting fixtures shall be a down-type having one hundred percent (100%) cut off. The light rays may not be emitted by the installed fixture at angles above the horizontal plane, as certified by the manufacturer's photometric test.
- e. Light sources shall be high-pressure sodium or halogen. Approved exceptions shall use warm white or natural lamp colors.
- f. Lighting shall be equipped with baffling or other devices to assure that the above requirements are achieved.
- g. The applicant shall submit the specifications for the lights, poles, fixtures and light sources to the City for approval prior to installation.
- h. The height of light poles shall not exceed twenty-five (25) feet as measured from average grade.